

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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JCS WASHDC

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USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCUSAFE

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SUBJ: THE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION--SPANISH REACTION

REF: MADRID 0573; MADRID 0574; MADRID 0587

SUMMARY: THE VERY UPBEAT SPANISH REACTION TO THE SECRETARY'S VISIT AND THE SIGNING OF THE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION, WHICH PRODUCED SUCH A GLOW OVER THE WEEKEND OF JAN 24-25, HAS GENERALLY HELD GOOD IN THE WEEK SINCE, EVEN THOUGH CRITICISM SEEPS THROUGH A MINORITY OF THE COMMENTARY. THE RATHER MORE CAUSTIC REACTIONS WHICH PAST PERFORMANCE WOULD HAVE LED US TO EXPECT FROM THE "PROGRESSIVE" WEEKLY PRESS FAILED TO MATERIALIZE FULLY. THIS MUTED CRITICISM FROM THE LEFT HAS BEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MATCHED IN A SENSE BY SILENCE FROM THE RIGHT. THE MILITARY

LEADERSHIP HAS ALSO BEEN SILENT IN PUBLIC, PERHAPS NOT A BAD SIGN GIVEN THE PAST RECORD OF LEAKS FROM THAT QUARTER.
END SUMMARY.

1. THE INITIAL SPANISH MEDIA TREATMENT GIVEN TO THE TREATY (REFTELS) WAS TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT THE RESULT OF VERY CAREFUL BRIEFING BY FOREIGN MINISTER AREILZA AND OTHERS. AREILZA PERSONALLY HAD BRIEFED THE PRESS, THE CABINET, THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE CORTES, AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL PRIOR TO SIGNATURE. ALSO IN CONTRAST TO THE TACTICS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE FRANCO ERA WAS THE WIDESPREAD PUBLICATION OF THE FULL TEXTS AND THE ASSURANCE BY AREILZA THAT ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WAS BEING HELD BACK. WHILE SOME COMMENTATORS ADOPTED A SHOW-ME ATTITUDE, MOST SEEMED QUITE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE AREILZA LINE THAT THIS WAS AN AGREEMENT CAREFULLY TAILORED TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FUTURE, AND THAT IT PROVIDED A QUALITATIVELY NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES AS WELL AS A VEHICLE TOWARD THE GREATER GOAL OF CLOSER INTEGRATION WITH EUROPE. THERE WAS, IN ADDITION, WIDESPREAD ATTENTION AND PRAISE FOR THE SECRETARY'S CLEARLY STATED SUPPORT FOR THE EFFORTS OF THIS NEW GOVT TOWARD EVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT.

2. MUCH OF THE EARLY COMMENT FOCUSED MORE ON THE OVERALL APPEARANCES THAN ON THE ACTUAL SUBSTANCE. ONE GOT THE FEELING AS WE MOVED THROUGH THE WEEK AFTER THE SIGNING THAT THE OTHER SHOE WOULD DROP SOONER OR LATER. BUT IT HAS YET TO DO SO. THE MORE "PROGRESSIVE" WEEKLY PRESS DID MANAGE TO KEEP ITS ENTHUSIASM UNDER SOME CONTROL, BUT ITS CRITICISMS OF THE AGREEMENT WERE INDEED MODEST IN COMPARISON WITH THE TONE OF COMMENTARY IN THE MONTHS PRECEDING THE SIGNATURE. PERHAPS MORE SIGNIFICANT IN THIS RESPECT HAS BEEN THE ALMOST ABSOLUTE SILENCE OF THE FAR RIGHT AND OF THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP. THE RIGHTIST DAILY NEWSPAPER "EL ALCAZAR" HAS CARRIED NO EDITORIAL COMMENT ON THE TREATY. ONE WAS INCLINED TO INTERPRET THE BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT BY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER FOR DEFENSE MATTERS, GEN. SANTIAGO, TO THE EFFECT THAT THE AGREEMENT WAS MORE POLITICAL THAN MILITARY AS PERHAPS INSPIRED IN PART BY THE VIEW EYRRESSED OFTEN IN PRIVATE IN THE WEEKS BEFORE SIGNATURE, AND SOMEWHAT SINCE, BY A NUMBER OF SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS THAT THIS AGREEMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROVIDES LITTLE REAL IMPROVEMENT FOR THE MILITARY OVER WHAT THEY HAD OBTAINED IN THE PAST.

3. PRIME MINISTER ARIAS WAS HIMSELF SOMEWHAT MODEST IN PRAISING THE AGREEMENT IN HIS JAN 28 POLICY STATEMENT TO THE CORTES, WHERE HE REFERRED BRIEFLY TO THE AGREEMENT BY STATING THAT IT PROVIDED "A MORE SATISFACTORY DEFINITION...OF MUTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS."

4. THE INTERNATIONAL REACTION BOTH IN THE UNITED STATES AND IN WESTERN EUROPE HAS BEEN REPORTED FAVORABLY HERE. DOMESTICALLY, REACTIONS IN AREAS AROUND OUR MAJOR FACILITIES HAVE PARALLELED THOSE IN MADRID, EXCEPT FOR ZARAGOZA, WHERE THE PRESS REACTED MOST NEGATIVELY TO THE DECISION TO PLACE A DETACHMENT OF KC-135 TANKER AIRCRAFT THERE AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF THE 98TH STRATEGIC WING FROM TORREJON. THE ZARAGOZAN REACTION SEEMS MORE RELATED AT THIS POINT TO PROVINCIAL SENSITIVITY ABOUT BEING DICTATED TO FROM MADRID THAN TO THE ISSUE OF THE POTENTIAL SAFETY HAZARD PRESENTED BY THE TANKERS. NONETHELESS, IT COULD PRESAGE SOME GROWTH OF ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT IN THAT AREA.

5. ALSO THE VEHICLE FOR SOME SHARP CRITICISM WAS THE GENERAL BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP--THIS PUT FORWARD IN THE CONTEXT OF ANALYSIS OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION. BARCELONA'S PRESTIGIOUS "VANGUARDIA" POINTED OUT THAT THE TOTAL ASSISTANCE PACKAGE IS LESS THAN THE 1975 BILATERAL TRADE DEFICIT WITH THE UNITED STATES. MADRID'S "YA" ADDED THAT THIS SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT WOULD ONLY BE MEANINGFUL IF SOMETHING WERE DONE ABOUT THE IMBALANCE IN TRADE AND COMPLAINED ABOUT GROWING U.S. PROTECTIONISM VIS-A-VIS SPAIN. THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT'S "ARRIBA" CALLED FOR AN END TO "BLACKLISTING" OF SPAIN'S PRODUCTS.

6. THE MAJOR THEMES IN THE MEDIA TREATMENT OF THE TREATY HAVE REFLECTED AREILZA'S OWN EFFORTS, I.E.:

-- THAT THERE IS A NEW QUALITATIVE RELATIONSHIP REPRESENTED BY THE DECISION TO SUBMIT THIS AGREEMENT TO THE U.S. SENATE AS A TREATY;

-- THAT THE AGREEMENT REPRESENTS STRONG U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE MONARCHY AND THE NEW GOVT IN THEIR EFFORTS TO MOVE SPAIN CARE-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FULLY ALONG THE PATH OF EVOLUTION;

-- THAT THE AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR NEW EFFORTS IN SUPPORT OF THE CLOSER INTEGRATION OF SPAIN IN EUROPE;

-- THAT THE "DENUCLEARIZATION OF SPAIN" BY MID-1979 (VIA REMOVAL OF THE SSBN'S) IS AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO SPAIN'S SECURITY; AND

-- THAT THE GREATER ECONOMIC VALUE TO SPAIN OF THE NEW AGREEMENT REFLECTS AN AWARENESS OF SPAIN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO WESTERN SECURITY.

7. THERE HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY FEW COMMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT TOO MANY FACILITIES HAVE BEEN GRANTED TO THE UNITED STATES, THIS IN

GREAT CONTRAST TO COMMENTARY IN THE MONTHS BEFORE SIGNATURE. TO DATE, APPARENTLY ONLY THE PCE HAS PRESSED THE LINE THAT THIS AGREEMENT MAY HAVE THE EFFECT OF IMPEDING POLITICAL EVOLUTION IN SPAIN. A FEW COMMENTATORS SUGGESTED FOR VARIOUS REASONS THAT THIS MIGHT WELL BE THE LAST IN THE SERIES OF SUCH BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WITH THE UNITED STATES. WHILE THERE WERE FEW DIRECT APPEALS TO NEUTRALIST SENTIMENT, THE EMPHASIS BY THE GOVT AND BY COMMENTATORS ON THE IMPORTANCE TO SPAIN OF "DENUCLEARIZATION" WAS OBVIOUSLY DESIGNED IN LARGE MEASURE TO RESPOND TO SUCH SENTIMENT. PERHAPS THE SAME CAN BE SAID OF THE SOMEWHAT EQUIVOCAL POSITION TAKEN BY AREILZA IN HIS REPORTED COMMENTS THAT THE U.S.-USED FACILITIES WILL HAVE NO USES RELATING TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND HIS COMMENT TO THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE CORTES REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF EVENTUAL MEMBERSHIP IN NATO (THIS WOULD BE "A GREAT ECONOMIC PROBLEM"). MEDIA COMMENTARY ON THE TREATY DOES NOT ASSUME EVENTUAL SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO TO BE A FOREGONE CONCLUSION.

8. IT WOULD BE AS MUCH A MISTAKE TO JUMP TO THE CONCLUSION THAT PUBLIC OPINION IS ACTIVELY SUPPORTIVE AS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST TO ACCEPT AT FACE VALUE THE CLAIMS OF OVERWHELMING OPPOSITION TO OUR MILITARY PRESENCE HERE. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS TREATY, THE WESTERN EUROPEAN RESPONSES TO IT AND INTERNAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE MORE IMPORTANT IN THIS RESPECT THAN THE BRIEF DISCUSSION WHICH HAS SURROUNDED ITS SIGNING.

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